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March 24, 2006

The Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

BY CERTIFIED MAIL

Sir:

Re: Terry M. Howley Application  
Serial No. 10/615,762

Enclosed is an Office action and attachment dated March 21, 2006 and relating to the above identified application. The Office action is addressed to John McCulloch, the undersigned.

On January 13, 2006 John McCulloch's request to be permitted to withdraw as attorney and on behalf of all attorneys of record, was approved. The Office action March 21, 2006, therefore, should not have been sent to John McCulloch.

It is respectfully requested that any further communications be forwarded to the applicant or to any substitute attorney he may have appointed.

Respectfully submitted,

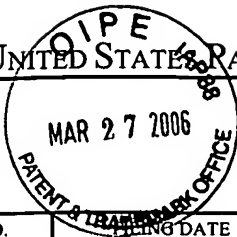


John K. McCulloch

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Enc



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APPLICATION NO.	FILED DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/615,762	07/09/2003	Terry M. Howley		9900
42083	7590	03/21/2006		
JOHN MCCULLOCH 5291 COLONY DRIVE NORTH, 1ST FLOOR SAGINAW, MI 48603				
			EXAMINER ROWAN, KURT C	
			ART UNIT 3643	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 03/21/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.



## Office Action Summary

Application No.	Applicant(s)	
10/615,762	HOWLEY, TERRY M.	
Examiner	Art Unit	
Kurt Rowan	3643	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on March 29, 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 21-40 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 24,27-30,32-36 and 38-40 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 21-23,25,26,31 and 37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)             | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Amendment***

1. Applicant's response of January 10, 2006 has been entered and the following Office Action applies.

### ***Election/Restrictions***

1. Claims 24, 27-30, 32-36, 38-40 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on March 29, 2005.
2. Applicant's election with traverse of Figures 3-5 in the reply filed on March 29, 2005 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that a structural characteristic is common to all of the Figs. This is not found persuasive because the inventions as shown in the different Figs. show different structural elements and are therefore patentably distinct.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

### ***Specification***

3. The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: the specification does not disclose that the body member is unitary.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 21-22, 25, 26, 31, and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Willey.

The patent to Willey in reference to claims 21 and 37, shows a fishing rod holder having a unitary body member 10 having a base 14 flanked by a pair of substantially coplanar flanges 16, 18. Willey shows an extension 36 unitarily joined to and projecting beyond one the flanges as shown in Fig. 3. Willey shows the extension having an open-ended notch 42 for removably receiving an elongate article such as a fishing rod 74. Willey shows that the fishing rod is disabled from movement in each of two opposite directions such as side to side movement. Willey shows that the rod has unrestricted movement in a direction parallel to the axis of the extension when the lever 68 is depressed. Willey shows the flanges having at least one slot such as 76 in flange 18 and 20 in flange 16. The broadest reasonable interpretation is applied to the term since applicant has not defined slots in the specification. Willey shows clamping means 22, 28 removably accommodated in the slots. Willey shows the body member clamped atop a support in Figs. 1-3 with the extension projecting upwardly from one of the flanges in a direction away from the support. Willey shows the support 24 is arcuate and the body member has a concave base for confronting and seating on the support. In reference to claim 25

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Willey shows a pair of clamp members 22, 28 coupled to the body with the space between the clamp members being sufficient to accommodate the support 24 between the clamp members. The clamp members can be interpreted to be in a substantially parallel spaced apart condition since the end faces of 22 and 28 are parallel. Applicant should define the invention more precisely to overcome this grounds of rejection. In reference to claim 26, Willey shows adjusting means as the head and threads on bolt 22 noting Fig. 1. In reference to claim 31, Willey shows means 22, 28 coupling the body member with clamping members 16, 18 and adjusting means as the threads on bolt 22 for rocking the clamp members relative to the body member and varying the space between the clamp members. The coupling means when loose are thought to rockably couple the clamp members to the body member.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Willey. The patent to Wiley shows a fishing rod holder as discussed above. Willey shows a U-shaped notch, but it would have been obvious to employ a V-shaped notch since the function is the same and no showing of unexpected results was made. Also, see In re Dailey et al., 149 USPQ 47 which states that changes in shape are obvious.

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***Conclusion***

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The patents to Mukdaprakorn, King, Gutierrez, Hawkins, Diggs, Hoerr, McBurney, Messinger, Cottrill, Guestinger, Bahr, Hadaway, Merckel, and Meachen show other fishing rod holders.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kurt Rowan whose telephone number is (571) 272-6893. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 6:30-5:00.

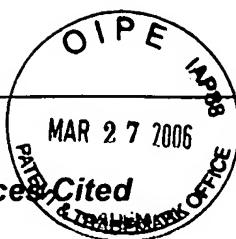
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Poon can be reached on (571) 272-6891. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Kurt Rowan  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3643

KR

**Notice of References Cited**

Application/Control No.

10/615,762

Applicant(s)/Patent Under  
Reexamination  
HOWLEY, TERRY M.

Examiner

Kurt Rowan

Art Unit

3643

Page 1 of 2

**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

*		Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Name	Classification
	A	US-6,898,893 B1	05-2005	Mukdaprakom, Lisa	43/21.2
	B	US-5,163,652 A	11-1992	King, Paul F.	248/538
	C	US-5,088,224 A	02-1992	Gutierrez, Manuel	43/21.2
	D	US-3,966,151	06-1976	Hawkins, III, Carl V.	43/21.2
	E	US-3,950,874	04-1976	Diggs, Richard E.	40/607.12
	F	US-3,184,192	05-1965	HOERR HARVEY T	248/538
	G	US-3,140,069	07-1964	MCBURNEY FAYE M; et. al.	248/514
	H	US-2,981,509	04-1961	MESSINGER CARUS L; et. al.	248/538
	I	US-2,961,209	11-1960	WILLEY CLAUDE W	248/515
	J	US-2,950,888	08-1960	COTTRILL DELBERT E; et. al.	248/540
	K	US-2,619,308	11-1952	GUESTINGER OSCAR L	248/518
	L	US-2,541,146	02-1951	BAHR WILLIAM D	248/538
	M	US-2,143,109	01-1939	HADAWAY JOHN B	248/516

**FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS**

*		Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Country	Name	Classification
	N					
	O					
	P					
	Q					
	R					
	S					
	T					

**NON-PATENT DOCUMENTS**

*		Include as applicable: Author, Title Date, Publisher, Edition or Volume, Pertinent Pages)
	U	
	V	
	W	
	X	

\*A copy of this reference is not being furnished with this Office action. (See MPEP § 707.05(a).)  
Dates in MM-YYYY format are publication dates. Classifications may be US or foreign.



<b>Notice of References Cited</b>	Application/Control No. 10/615,762	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination HOWLEY, TERRY M.	
	Examiner Kurt Rowan	Art Unit 3643	Page 2 of 2

**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

*		Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Name	Classification
	A	US-1,788,536	01-1931	MERCKEL CHARLES O	248/515
-	B	US-1,520,543	12-1924	JAMES MEACHEN	248/534
	C	US-			
-	D	US-			
	E	US-			
	F	US-			
	G	US-			
	H	US-			
	I	US-			
	J	US-			
	K	US-			
	L	US-			
	M	US-			

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